

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the rejection of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

The Abstract

The Examiner objected to the Abstract because it does not commence on a separate sheet in accordance with 37 CFR 1.52(b)(4). Applicants note that this application is the U.S. national phase of an international application under the PCT. MPEP 1893.03(e) states the following regarding the abstract in such cases.

When the international application is published as the pamphlet, the abstract is reproduced on the cover page of the publication, even though it appears on a separate sheet of the international application in accordance with PCT Rule 11.4(a). Thus the requirement of 37 CFR 1.52(b) that the abstract "commence on a separate sheet" does not apply to the copy of the application (pamphlet) communicated to the designated Offices by the International Bureau under PCT Article 20. Accordingly, it is improper for the examiner of the U.S. national stage application to require the applicant to provide an abstract commencing on a separate sheet if the abstract does not appear on a separate sheet in the pamphlet. Unless the abstract is properly amended under the U.S. rules during national stage processing, the abstract that appears on the cover page of the pamphlet will be the abstract published by the USPTO under 35 U.S.C. 122(b) and in any U.S. patent issuing from the application.

Accordingly, a new abstract on a separate sheet is not required for this application.

The Claims

35 USC 112, Second Paragraph

In the Official Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-17 and 21 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. In making the rejection the Examiner explained that the phrase "and/or" in line 1 of Claim 1, the phrase "symbol(s), object(s), or image(s) is/are" in Claim 11, and the phrase "mouth and/or nose aperture(s)" in Claim 21, rendered those claims indefinite.

Applicants have amended Claims 1 and 11 to remove the phrases objected to by the Examiner. Claim 21 has been cancelled. Accordingly, it is believed that the rejection of Claims 1-17 under Section 112, second paragraph is overcome and the rejection of Claim 21 under that section is now moot.

Claims 4 to 16

In the Official Action, the Examiner indicated that Claims 4-16 and 20 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim or claims.

In addition to the amendments described above, Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the features of Claims 2, 3, and 4. Claims 2-4 have been cancelled. Accordingly, it is believed that Claims 1 to 16 are now in condition for allowance. Claim 20 has been cancelled.

Claim 19

In the Official Action, the Examiner indicated that Claim 19 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 19 as originally presented depended from Claim 18, an independent claim. Claim 18 has been amended to include the additional features set forth in Claim 19 and Claim 19 has been cancelled. Accordingly, it is believed that Claim 18 as now presented is in condition for allowance.

Claim 22

In the Official Action, the Examiner indicated that Claim 22 was allowed.

New Claims 23 to 28

In the Official Action, the Examiner indicated that Claims 4-16 would be allowable if amended to overcome the rejection based on 35 USC 112, second paragraph, and to include all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 8 as originally presented, depended from Claim 1. New Claim 23 includes all of the features of original Claims 1 and 8, and it avoids the problem under Section 112,

second paragraph, attributed to original Claim 1. Accordingly, Claim 23 is believed to be in condition for allowance.

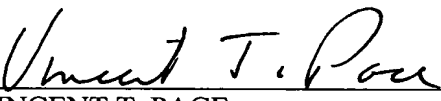
New Claims 24-28 depend from Claim 23 either directly or indirectly and thus, include all of the features of that claim. Accordingly, Claims 24-28 are believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons as Claim 23.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that this application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the application in the light of the amendments and remarks presented hereinabove.

Respectfully submitted,

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